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ABSTRACT

In every state of the United States, efforts are under way to improve the way education is provided; however, no single reform strategy dominates. This document summarizes major statewide reforms under way in each of the 50 states. The impetus for reform, the driving agencies or institutions behind reform, as well as the intended results, vary from state to state. States also vary according to reasons for reform, leadership, vehicles through which reform is carried out, and the level at which it occurs. Information is based on the Education Commission of the States (ECS) database and on data collected by traveling ECS policy analysts. A glossary of terms and an index are included. (LMI)

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State-Level K-12 Education Reform Activities

Education Commission of the States

EA 026 446

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State-Level K-12 Education Reform Activities

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June 1994

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The SHEEO organization has prepared a companion document, *State-Level Education Reform: Collaborative Roles for Postsecondary Education*, which outlines collaborative efforts connecting higher education and K-12 education reforms. For information about that document, contact SHEEO at 707 17th St., Suite 2700, Denver, CO 80202; 303-299-3686.

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Contents

Introduction 1

Glossary 3

K-12 Education Initiatives 6
Alabama 6
Alaska 7
Arizona 7
Arkansas 8
California 10
Colorado 11
Connecticut 12
Delaware 14
District of Columbia 15
Florida 16
Georgia 17
Hawaii 18
Idaho 19
Illinois 19
Indiana 20
Iowa 21
Kansas 21
Kentucky 22
Louisiana 23
Maine 24
Maryland 25
Massachusetts 26
Michigan 27
Minnesota 28
Mississippi 30
Missouri 30
Montana 31
Nebraska 31
Nevada 32
New Hampshire 33
New Jersey 33
New Mexico 34
New York 36
North Carolina 37
North Dakota 38
Ohio 39
Oklahoma 40
Oregon 41
Pennsylvania 43
Puerto Rico 44
Rhode Island 44
South Carolina 45

Contents (Continued)

South Dakota 46
Tennessee 47
Texas 48
Utah 49
Vermont 50
Virginia 51
Washington 52
West Virginia 53
Wisconsin 53
Wyoming 54

Index **55**

Introduction

In every state, efforts are under way to improve the way education is provided, but no single reform strategy dominates. The impetus for reform, the driving agencies or institutions behind reform, as well as the intended results, vary from state to state. The reasons states pursue reform range from local pressure for improvement to state policymakers responding to national forces such as the National Education Goals. Some states are responding to recent economic and demographic changes, while other states are looking ahead to new and challenging economies of the 21st century, attempting to create education systems that will provide their residents with the skills and knowledge they will need to succeed in the workforce and in their future lives.

Around the nation, reform has different leaders as well. In some states, leadership rests in the courts; in others, initiative comes from the governor's office. Still elsewhere, reform leadership comes from legislatures, state boards or departments of education, business, industry or community groups.

Vehicles for reform are as diverse as the people behind them. Efforts focus on: goals and standards, governance, assessment, materials, curriculum frameworks, accountability, school funding, choice, and charter schools. No state has a single, monolithic reform under way. Across the country, observers find multiple pressures stimulating reform; a variety of state-level people, departments or agencies responding with different initiatives; and reforms changing various elements of the state's education system.

Caveats

The following summaries are based on materials and documents available in the ECS Information Clearinghouse and on extensive notes of ECS staff who travel and conduct policy analyses in specific states.

The information is not meant to be exhaustive or complete. Rather, it outlines major reforms in each state to provide readers with a sense of how broad reform is across the country, as well as how deep and complex individual state efforts are. ECS welcomes further information and descriptions of state-level activities not included.

In addition to state-level reforms — those enacted by governors, state legislatures, state boards or departments of education and special commissions and task forces — every state has many district- and school-level programs, as well as partnerships between individual schools and outside entities. This document does not attempt to list or describe these efforts or the many reform activities at the national level. It also does not list higher education reform initiatives.

The programs, projects and initiatives listed for the states vary considerably. This document has not attempted to evaluate the effectiveness, degree of implementation or the staying power of these reforms. No evaluation, comparison or contrasting of state efforts was attempted or intended.

Glossary

Charter Schools

Charter schools are developed by individuals who wish to operate a public school independently of their local school boards. By agreeing to the terms of a charter, granted by the state, the new school sets out what it expects students to achieve. As long as the school meets the terms of its charter, it is free from many rules and regulations governing traditional schools.

Charter schools still must operate as public schools in a non-sectarian environment, meet safety and health standards and not discriminate on the basis of race, sex or ethnicity. Legislation varies from state to state, but charter schools receive an amount of money close to what is spent on students in other schools in the same district. Legislation also varies on the procedures for converting existing schools, on who may apply for a charter, on mechanisms for appealing rejection of applications and on what rules and regulations charter schools are exempted from.

Choice

Choice programs vary dramatically from state to state. The basic idea behind such programs is to allow parents to decide which schools their children will attend. Some states allow for choice within districts and others between districts. Still other districts encourage choice programs but do not mandate that all districts participate.

National Education Goals

In 1989, the nation's governors and then-President George Bush agreed to the six National Education Goals. In 1994, these goals were amended with two additional goals and codified by the "Goals 2000: Educate America Act." Prior to this most recent federal activity, numerous states were acting to approve the national goals. This document lists states that have passed legislation on some version of the national goals. The many efforts by communities, school districts and major cities to meet the national goals are not identified in this piece.

The original six National Education Goals are:

By the year 2000:

- All children in America will start school ready to learn.
- The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90%.
- American students will leave grades 4, 8 and 12 having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter, including English, mathematics, science, history and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning and productive employment in our modern economy.
- American students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.
- Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
- Every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

In 1994, the "Goals 2000: Educate America Act" added two additional goals:

- The nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.

- Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional and academic growth of children.

National Science Foundation
Statewide Systemic Initiatives (NSF-SSI)

The National Science Foundation describes its Statewide Systemic Initiative effort as follows:

> "The Statewide Systemic Initiative (SSI) Program is a major effort by the National Science Foundation (NSF) to encourage improvements in science, mathematics and engineering education through comprehensive systemic changes in the education systems of the states. The SSI Program was initiated in 1991 and resulted in three rounds of competition. A total of 25 states and Puerto Rico received five-year awards.
>
> The SSI Program represents a strategy to strengthen the infrastructure for science and mathematics education through alignment of state policies and resources. This requires the collaboration of educators at all levels, business and industry, parents and the community at large." (*SSI Statewide Systemic Initiatives in Science, Mathematics and Engineering 1993-1994: State Profiles*, p. 3.)

New Standards Project

The New Standards Project is a collaboration between the National Center on Education and the Economy and the Learning Research and Development Center. The purpose of the project is to adopt high national education standards and develop rigorous new assessment methods to measure progress toward those standards. Nineteen states and six urban school districts participate. New methods of assessment include portfolios, projects and timed performance appraisals. In participating states, assessments receive extensive review and field testing. The project makes use of the expertise of teachers, education researchers and organizations such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Performance-Based Initiatives

Many states are engaged in initiatives that focus their education systems on student performance. Rather than managing state education systems on the basis of inputs — such as number of school days per year, class hours per day, classes in a particular topic attended — these states are focusing on outcomes of education by restructuring schools, curriculum, instruction, assessment and accountability around demonstrated success by students.

To begin with, states are developing academic standards, goals, learner outcomes and performance and content standards that describe what is expected of students and schools. These terms are by no means synonymous, and even initiatives described with similar terminology by different states can vary considerably. This document groups such initiatives to reflect the broad extent of this general approach, not to indicate a strict adherence to a specific orthodoxy or particular set of associated policy changes being pursued across the board.

Re:Learning

Re:Learning is a major national effort begun in 1988 as a partnership between the Education Commission of the States and the Coalition of Essential Schools with the primary objective of redesigning the total education system. It is grounded in the belief that meaningful school improvement only comes through comprehensive school redesign and that education policy at all levels must nurture innovation rather than create barriers to change. This view requires the focus and action of people throughout the system.

Since 1988, 11 states have formally joined the effort (Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Missouri, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and South Carolina). Five additional states are exploring membership (Florida, Massachusetts, Ohio, Michigan, Texas). States that join the Re:Learning network agree to work with ECS on redefining policy, administrative relationships and governance structures to stimulate and support innovative school improvement. Typically, such structural and policy changes are developed by groups of leaders representing the governor's office, legislature, higher education, state education department and board of education, professional associations and unions, business, local communities, teachers and administrators. Policy areas frequently addressed include assessment, school finance, professional development, curriculum, teacher certification, equity, and state-level governance issues.

K-12 Education Initiatives

Alabama

Major reform in the state is being driven by a school finance court case, but the solution is unclear

A circuit court judge ruled that the state's funding formula violates the Alabama Constitution because it fails to provide schoolchildren with equitable and adequate education opportunities. The judge also ordered an overhaul of the entire education system. He called for state officers to provide a system that offers all children, regardless of the wealth of the community in which they live, substantially equitable and adequate educational opportunities. Judge Gene Reese used language similar to that used in the 1990 Kentucky Supreme Court ruling that forced that state to completely reinvent its education system. His language may necessitate some form of performance standards in Alabama's solution.

In October 1993, the court ordered enactment of the statewide reform strategy. A legislative package likely will be enacted in 1994. The governor's office participated in the development of one proposed plan, "Alabama First: A Plan for Academic Excellence." This proposal includes goals, learning objectives, curriculum guidelines, assessments, teacher training, deregulation and site-based management, report cards and intervention for failing schools.

Previously, in November 1992, the state board of education adopted six learner outcomes for public schools. The outcomes are:

1. Life-long learning
2. Global awareness
3. Personal and community stewardship
4. Creative thinking and problem solving
5. Technological literacy
6. Effective communication

Under this plan, local school boards are designated to develop assessments and curriculum that reflect the learner outcomes. The state also has "acknowledged" and committed itself to achieving the nation's six education goals.

Reform issues

- Accountability
- Performance-based initiatives
- Equity
- National Education Goals

Alaska

The Alaska State Board of Education established Alaska 2000 based on the national Goals 2000 reform effort, committing Alaska to pursuing and tracking progress toward the six national education goals.

Jerry Covey, state education commissioner, developed an education reform plan at the governor's request. The plan, "AK2K," was endorsed by the state board of education. AK2K established 10 committees to make recommendations in the following areas:

1. Choice and incentives
2. Early childhood
3. Facilities
4. Finance
5. Laws and regulation
6. Quality of workforce
7. Shared decisionmaking/self-renewal
8. Student outcomes and assessment
9. System accountability
10. Technology

Committee recommendations will include:

- Choice of postsecondary courses, through funding of 13th year of schooling
- Adoption of state goals (adopted May 1993)
- Performance standards — committees in English, science and math recommendations
- Technical-preparation recommendations

Reform issues

- Performance assessments
- Workforce skills
- Performance-based initiative
- National Education Goals

Arizona

Arizona's Essential Skills curriculum framework documents, developed by committees sponsored by the state department of education, outline outcomes, products and processes that students in grades 3, 5 and 12 are expected to demonstrate. A legislative initiative, Goals for Educational Excellence, connected the Essential Skills with a performance-based, integrated assessment system called the Arizona Student Assessment Program (ASAP). Now fully implemented, ASAP assesses the outcomes or products at grades 3, 8 and 12; has teachers and community members score the performance assessments; requires districts to assess students at other grade levels using district forms of the state assessments or other measures such as portfolios; uses a norm-referenced test to measure student achievement in the fall according to a matrix sampling process; and requires districts to use school and district report cards on a variety of measures to set and measure goals.

A four-level accreditation model is based on the assessment. Schools can be in compliance at any of the following levels.

A. Simple compliance with state regulations

B. Compliance with site visit

C. Meeting the North Central Accreditation Association's criteria, or criteria which is the equivalent of North Central's

D. Complete accordance with ASAP, attempting to achieve high goals and meeting those goals.

"D-level" schools are excused from regulations. Districts set goals for their own level of achievement. ASAP measures performance of students toward learning goals, tieing higher levels of accreditation to outcomes.

Governor Fife Symington created a statewide task force on Public Employment and Training. The Morrison Institute at Arizona State University was asked to study the overlap between current programs and the extent to which federal programs dictate state policy. The study recommended creation of a Governor's Office of Employment and Training to broaden the state's approach to workforce development, streamline current programs and nurture alliances between employment training and economic development.

Reform issues

- Performance assessments
- Performance-based initiatives
- Accountability
- Limited choice
- Workforce skills

Arkansas

In 1991, the legislature created a task force to develop "learner outcomes and curriculum frameworks." The reform legislation, Act 236, is called "Meeting the National Education Goals: Schools for Arkansas' Future." It required the state board of education to adopt learner outcomes that define what students must know and be able to do to be competitive nationally and internationally within the context of the National Education Goals. Curriculum frameworks define the broad themes and topics of instruction to prepare students to demonstrate the learner outcomes.

The plan integrated: (1) curriculum frameworks, (2) new student performance assessment tools, not limited to standardized tests, to judge student progress and (3) professional development programs, to provide teachers, principals and other administrators with content knowledge and pedagogical skills required to help all students achieve the learner outcomes.

The legislation also required development of a plan to reorganize the state education agency to support education restructuring. Accordingly, the state department of education has restructured itself to model the types of changes required by schools in the restructuring process, including a reallocation of resources.

In addition, the legislation established an advisory board to monitor the state's progress toward these objectives and created a "leadership academy" to provide expanded professional development opportunities for educators and administrators

In May 1993, the state education board revised the 57 education standards adopted in 1984 and made the following additional changes:

- By the 1996-97 school year, students must follow one of two tracks of study — traditional college preparatory or postsecondary vocational-technical preparatory program.
- Students must pass 21 credits in grades 9-12 in order to graduate, adding one credit each in math and science and one-half credit in oral communication.
- Teachers in K-3 classes must spend two extra days in staff development by 1994-95.

Act 236 also acknowledged the six National Education Goals and committed the state to make the necessary restructuring efforts to achieve those goals. The legislation stated:

> The State of Arkansas, through the state board of education and the general education division of the department of education, must determine what students must know and be able to do in order to meet the goals. This will not simply require more students to learn what is already taught. Instead, it will require a curriculum that places a greater emphasis on teaching students to think and to apply methods that are appropriate to ensure that all students will master the more challenging curriculum.
>
> In order to achieve these new levels of performance within existing and limited resources, Arkansas must fundamentally restructure its education system. This means providing educators in every school with the flexibility and tools they need to determine the best way to achieve the goals with their students. It means providing them with the training they need to teach new materials in new ways and with leadership and other skills they need to work together in new ways and succeed in a new education environment. Institutions of higher education must commit themselves to effectively providing new teachers with the content knowledge and pedagogical skills required to help all students achieve the goals. Arkansas schools need student performance assessment tools that are well matched to new standards for student performance and that accurately measure what is taught. The results of these performance assessment tools must be incorporated into school report cards so that parents and the general public will be informed as to what students are expected to know and to be able to do and how well Arkansas public schools are performing (6-15-1002)

A recent discovery that the school funding formula has not been implemented in accordance with the legislative intent likely will cause the governor to call for a special legislative session.

The state also has a $10 million National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative (NSF SSI) grant. The Arkansas SSI "promotes the restructuring of mathematics and science education by (1) changing attitudes toward mathematics and science, (2) improving student and worker skills and (3) fostering long term community involvement in the education system," according to NSF state profiles. The program includes: teacher training and professional development, integrated curriculum, applied academics, leadership training, leadership activities and community leadership.

Re:Learning was involved in the creation of Act 236 and has remained involved in creating policy favoring restructuring schools.

Reform issues

- Performance-based initiatives
- Accountability

- Workforce skills
- Choice
- Professional development
- National Education Goals
- Re:Learning state
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- New Standards Project

California The 1983 California Education Improvement Incentive Program required implementation of the California Assessment Program (CAP) at participating schools. The program includes achievement and performance tests and basic skills and content courses and is used to measure the improvement of school performance, with an emphasis on higher-order thinking skills — logical analysis, drawing inferences and communicating ideas. In addition to the assessment program, the Education Improvement Incentive Program authorizes model curriculum standards — state curriculum frameworks.

California has led the nation in creating hundreds of categorical programs to overcome problems identified in the 1983 report *A Nation At Risk*. Charter schools, at-risk programs, new curriculum frameworks, networks of schools by thematic change and teacher and leadership academies are among the many innovations of the last decade.

In the last two years, the California Learning Assessment System (CLAS) was developed and the results of last fall's initial administration of the test were released in March 1994. The assessment, which cost more than $27 million, demonstrates Californians' commitment to determine students' actual level of performance against criterion-based standards.

The LEARN (Los Angeles Education Alliance for Restructuring Now) program in Southern California brings together almost 300 community and business groups to create and sustain systemic change throughout greater Los Angeles area schools. Long-term partnerships are demonstrating success, and the Los Angeles school district is creating regional clusters to support community-based, multi-agency school reform of many types, including a national New American Schools Demonstration Project. Yet members of these same coalitions believe much more substantial change is still necessary.

In 1992, California became the second state to approve the establishment of charter schools. Senate Bill 1448 allowed for 100 charter schools to be developed statewide.

California received a $10 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. Under the grant, California will bring together top state leaders with emphasis on full participation for under-represented groups, address barriers to improvement of K-6 science and middle-grades math, examine objectives to gain public support, develop and promote elementary science instruction and make curriculum and instruction consistent with National Council of Teachers of Mathematics standards. Also, according to NSF state profiles, "The California Advocacy for Mathematics and Science (CAMS) Initiative will foster mathematics numeracy and science literacy among all California students by offering a new, more engaging mathematics and science curriculum in the public schools. To achieve this, the CAMS initiative will create a strong and lasting alliance among parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, university scientists and mathematicians, community organizations, business and political leaders."

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Charter schools
- Curriculum frameworks
- Accountability
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- New Standards Project

Colorado In 1993, the Colorado Legislature passed House Bill #1313, establishing a state council to develop content standards and directing the state board of education and local districts to adopt content standards and assessments. HB 1313 defined content standards as "a compilation of specific statements of what students should know or be able to do relative to a particular academic area."

The legislation directed the new council to write draft standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science, history and geography. The council is to recommend model content standards in art, music, physical education and civics as well. Draft standards in the first six subjects were released in mid-1994 and circulated widely for comment. By January 1995, the state education board is to adopt model content standards.

By January 1997, local districts must adopt content standards that meet or exceed state standards. School districts then will establish a plan to implement the standards-based education. The legislation also requires the state board of education to waive regulatory requirements to help districts implement the reforms. By 1995, the department of education is to begin statewide assessments in the 4th, 8th and 10th grades to measure progress toward meeting the new standards.

In 1993, Colorado also passed the Charter Schools Act, Senate Bill #183. Colorado's legislation provided that as part of the application and renewal of a charter school, applicants must report school progress toward achieving the goals, objectives, pupil performance standards, content standards and other terms of the charter application. Fifty schools can be approved statewide. If local school boards do not approve charter applications, applicants can appeal to the state board of education. As of May 1994, two charter schools were operating in Colorado, and another nine were scheduled to open in fall 1994. Eight applications that had been rejected by local boards were appealed to the state board. The state board upheld the rejection of six of these applications and "remanded" the other two applications back for further consideration by the original districts.

The act also required the department of education to prepare an annual report and evaluation for the governor and general assembly on the success or failure of charter schools and their relationship to other school reform efforts. In addition, the legislation suggested changes in state law necessary to strengthen or change the charter school program.

SB 183 was amended during the 1994 legislative session to permit children of parents who helped form a charter school to have preferential access to the school if it opens. Some local districts had sought continued approval to use only the geographic boundary criterion or a lottery system to determine local school assignment.

In 1991, the legislature passed a new Educator Licensing Bill mandating a new system of licensing teachers, administrators and specialists based on skill and competency standards. The legislation also

directed the governor to appoint two new professional boards to advise the state board of education, which the governor did 18 months before the July 1, 1994, deadline set by the legislature.

In its May 1994 meeting, the state board of education adopted the advisory board's licensing standards, but added both a letter of warning and specific language making the new standards valid for a few months only while the board itself develops stronger skill and competency standards and assessment criteria.

Colorado also received a $10 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. According to NSF state profiles, "Colorado classrooms, schools, colleges and universities, workplaces and communities will ensure that all Colorado citizens possess high levels of mathematical and scientific literacy." The grant activities include: "local catalyst partnerships" among schools, higher education institutions, parents, business/industry and state and federal agencies; state infrastructure restructuring; and the appropriate use of technology.

Re:Learning has worked with the state department of education to authorize school-level teams of professionals from across the education system (educators, administrators, state department personnel and others) to assist restructuring schools in making changes.

Reform issues

- Performance-based initiative
- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Workforce skills
- Choice
- Charter schools
- Re:Learning state
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- New Standards Project

Connecticut

In 1993, facing a court decision to remedy segregation problems in the schools, the Connecticut legislature voluntarily divided the state into 11 regions and directed each region to develop its own integration plan, using school choice, magnet schools and other alternatives. The state education commissioner has broad authority over regional proposals. However, there is no sanction for failure to implement plans.

In addition to desegregation issues, the state created a Commission on Educational Excellence with 43 members. It was charged to study and recommend changes in an advisory capacity. Its recently released recommendations include:

- Expanded early childhood education, primarily in urban areas
- Rewards for schools showing improvement and high student achievement
- A "results-based" education system

The "results-based element raised considerable controversy in the state and led to its eventual failure in the 1994 legislative session. Controversy centered on the public's acceptance of results-based education and on whether major education reform was needed at all.

The Connecticut Education Enhancement Act of 1986 previously established a select education roundtable committee to study: (1) the state system of education funding; (2) the impact of the reform bill and its implications on public and nonpublic schools, municipalities and the state; (3) the feasibility of subject competency testing and general skills testing of teachers; and (4) the establishment of minimum educational achievement standards concerning student promotion and graduation.

In 1986, the education department developed Connecticut's Common Core of Learning, which established academic outcomes for students. The Common Core is divided into four topics, with related subtopics. Under attributes and attitudes, students are to develop: positive self-concept, motivation and persistence, responsibility and self-reliance, intellectual curiosity, interpersonal relations, sense of community, and moral and ethical values. Under skills and competencies, the areas addressed are: reading; writing; speaking, listening and viewing; quantitative skills, reasoning and problem solving; and learning skills. Under understandings and applications are the arts, creative and performing; careers and vocations; cultures and languages; and science and technology.

The defined skills and competencies are assessed by the Connecticut Mastery Test Program (CMT), which assesses basic language arts/reading, writing and math skills at grades 4, 6 and 8. A new version of CMT will use new content areas and forms of assessment techniques (performance assessment and short-answer questions).

The Connecticut State Department of Education is developing the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT). This statewide assessment will be administered to 10th-grade students in math, reading, writing, social studies and science. CAPT will use a wide variety of assessment formats, including extended performance assessments, open-ended, short-answer questions and traditional multiple-choice items.

Connecticut also received a $7.8 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative (SSI) grant. Under the grant, "the state proposes to begin the long-term institutional change in attitude and behavior necessary for local school districts to implement improvement in the way they think about, deliver and assess mathematics and science teaching and learning," according to NSF's state profiles.

The grant activities include five interrelated components:

1. Establishment of the Connecticut Academy for Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology, which will be chartered by the general assembly and will set standards, assist local districts in reform, and serve as an advocate for educational equity
2. District-level curriculum reform and teacher enhancement
3. Activities involving higher education, including restructured teacher preparation and collaboration with schools.
4. Math and science enrichment programs for students and parents provided by science-rich institutions, business and industry.
5. A public relations campaign for public understanding of the importance of education in mathematics, science and technology. (Connecticut SSI Synopsis)

Reform Issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance-based initiative

- Accountability
- Teacher competency
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- New Standards Project

Delaware The Delaware State Department of Education is implementing a comprehensive plan called "New Directions" which establishes content and performance standards for all subjects. New Directions is funded at $24 per student per year, with $5 coming from the local district and $7 from the state. An additional $12 will be raised per student per year from the private sector.

After some initial testing, assessment practices will be reexamined to be sure they match the standards. Norm-referenced standardized tests will have a reduced role. The state is developing performance, criterion and portfolio assessments. About 200 teachers worked on scoring assessments and developed rubrics for scoring based on teacher judgment. A writing assessment for grade 10 is already in place.

Curriculum frameworks will be developed on the basis of the content and performance standards; they will include suggested learning and teaching practices. These suggested practices will be illustrated by the state through "polished stones" — detailed examples of lesson plans and units of instruction that fit the new frameworks.

The Re:Learning effort has influenced the development of New Directions, particularly with regard to technical assistance and university affiliation with the project.

Delaware also received a five-year, $5.4 million National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative (NSF SSI) grant. This project, Project 21, is part of New Directions and seeks to: "(1) Effect fundamental and widespread change in the teaching and learning of mathematics and science, (2) craft assessment systems that would help drive and measure valued student performances, and (3) build a school and community culture that would support rigorous teaching and learning in mathematics and science for all children," according to NSF state profiles. Activities include establishing "development partners" among the school-based teams of teachers, administrators, support professionals and district superintendents; changing schools through influencing policy and building capacity; convening people with a stake in the schools; networking principals; offering sub-grants and competition; establishing mentoring/tutoring programs; and working with the mathematics and Science Curriculum Commission of the New Directions Project.

The state education department also is handing responsibility for professional development over to university-based research and development centers which are equipped to conduct technical assistance. Teacher centers are being developed under this plan.

Reform issues

- Performance-based initiative
- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Re:Learning state
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- New Standards Project

District of Columbia

The District of Columbia has eight goals for preparing students for the 21st Century. These goals are based on the six National Education Goals and the National Urban Education Goals: readiness to learn; increased graduation rates; improved academic achievement; quality teachers; postsecondary opportunities; and safe and caring environments. In addition, the District of Columbia added two other goals: All students will demonstrate an appreciation for the cultural arts, and parents will be actively involved in their children's education.

The district has a proposed accountability framework that incorporates inputs, programs and performance outcomes. Decisions made by the mayor's office, city council and board of education dictate the resources available, then the district makes decisions based on the eight goals. Data are collected and consolidated from existing sources into one report used at both the school and district levels. The data are used, according to district materials, "by school restructuring teams for school improvement, central administration for corrective measures, policymakers for future decisions on resource allocations, and citizens who support the system with tax revenues." This system is outlined in *Baseline Indicators: A Framework for Accountability*, published by the district superintendent's office in 1993.

Following a January 1993 "Education Summit," the mayor, city council and board of education issued a Memorandum of Agreement outlining emergency measures to address financial concerns, as well as a promise to "work together to improve the District of Columbia Public Schools, including enhanced educational standards and student achievement, through improved interagency cooperation and communication." To address financial pressures, the district attempted to reduce its workforce by 883 employees and close 10 schools. To help meet long-term objectives, four interagency committees were established in finance, collaboration, principal/teacher evaluation and incentives, and standards.

According to *Baseline Indicators*, the D.C. public school system has developed, is in the process of developing, or will be developing standards in the following areas:

- Graduation requirements
- Student exit outcomes
- Curriculum frameworks
- Course classification system
- Instructional methods
- Textbooks, software and supplementary materials
- Student assessments
- Criteria for staffing ratios
- Teacher training and mentoring programs and staff development
- Instructional and educational technology
- Physical plant and classroom standards
- School organization including graded schools vs. non-graded
- Time allocations for core subject areas and scheduling
- Career ladders
- Professional assessments of beginning teachers for licensing purposes
- Provisional certification for professionals seeking an alternative certificate
- Performance evaluation

Reform issues

- Performance-based initiative
- Accountability

Florida Florida's Education Reform Act of 1990 established a system of school improvement based on the performance of students and education programs. The system establishes state and local education goals; increases the use of educational outcomes over processes in assessing school programs; and redirects state fiscal and human resources to help school districts and schools meet state and local goals for student success in school and later in life.

In 1991, the legislature adopted seven statewide goals for education, based on the six National Education Goals. The legislation stated that "the state as a whole shall work toward the following goals:

(a) Readiness to start school — Communities and schools collaborate to prepare children and families for children's success in school.

(b) Graduation rate and readiness for postsecondary education and employment — Students graduate and are prepared to enter the workforce and postsecondary education.

(c) Student performance — Students successfully compete at the highest levels nationally and internationally and are prepared to make well-reasoned, thoughtful and healthy lifelong decisions.

(d) Learning environment — School boards provide a learning environment conducive to teaching and learning that includes sequential instruction in mathematics, science, reading, writing and the social sciences, and appropriate educational materials, equipment and pupil-teacher ratio.

(e) School safety and environment — Communities provide an environment that is drug-free and protects students' health, safety and civil rights.

(f) Teachers and staff — The schools, district and state ensure professional teachers and staff.

(g) Adult literacy — Adult Floridians are literate and have the knowledge and skills needed to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Florida's *Blueprint 2000*, established by the legislature in 1991, provided for the Commission on Education Reform and Accountability to establish performance standards that indicate progress toward state and local goals; recommending methods of measuring progress; defining "adequate progress" toward goals; recommending development of incentives for schools that make exceptional progress; providing guidelines for dealing with schools that do not improve; and pinpointing statutes, rules and policies that stand in the way of school improvement.

Blueprint 2000 directed schools and districts to elect representatives of all "shareholder" groups to serve as School Advisory Council members, who develop and approve an annual school improvement plan used to meet accreditation measures. Each school plan details how the school will meet standards of achievement on indicators they choose. Every school issues a report card about the school, including graduation rates and test scores.

Advisory councils also develop a three-year plan to meet goals. Failure to meet selected goals leads to the school or district being supervised for a year and eventually to the state's taking over. The *Blueprint 2000* legislation provides for a process that allows school boards to apply for a waiver from requirements of specified laws in order "to facilitate innovative practices and to allow local selection of educational methods."

In addition, high schools may enter into "interlocal" agreements with postsecondary institutions to offer students vocational or college-level experiences and credits at no cost to the student. Interlocal agreements designate the courses or programs in which high school students may enroll.

In August 1993, Commissioner of Education Betty Castor appointed a task force on high-school preparation for postsecondary education and employment. The task force was to recommend to the state education board and 1994 legislature changes in policy and practice that would ensure students are prepared for postsecondary education and that graduation requirements conform to the competency-based goals of *Blueprint 2000*.

Florida also received a five-year, $7.9 million National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative (NSF SSI) grant. Under the grant, Florida "envisions all students having the appropriate academic background and experiences to give them the opportunity to pursue the career of their choice and be informed decisionmakers in local, state and national issues," according to NSF state profiles. Grant activities include: school district collaboration; collaboration with the Florida Department of Education; model reform documents and materials for staff development, including handbooks for lead teachers, planning guides to technology education and materials for community communication; and collaborating with the Higher Education Consortium.

Reform issues

- Performance-based initiative
- Governance
- Accountability
- Postsecondary open enrollment
- Site-based management
- Workforce skills
- National Education Goals
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- New Standards Project

Georgia

In 1993, Georgia passed Senate Bill 74, an extensive charter schools program, with no upper limit on the number of schools involved. In addition, the Next Generation Schools program funds 18 school districts, with a total of $6 million, for K-12 education restructuring projects.

The state's new lottery is providing money for expanding early childhood education. The money also is being used to provide students who graduate from high school with a B-gradepoint average a guaranteed level of financial assistance in Georgia higher education institutions. Finally, lottery funds are being used to help schools acquire new technology.

The state's previous high school graduation test was given in 10th grade, with remediation provided for students identified as needing assistance. The current graduation test is given in 11th grade, focuses on four topics and provides no remediation money because students were expected to pass each topic. However, concerns over the numbers of students failing led to science and social studies being tested, but with the scores not used to determine eligibility for graduation.

The statewide Student Assessment Program gives writing assessments in grades 3, 5, 8 and 11. It is scored by teachers and readers at the University of Georgia on five aspects of writing using a scale of 1 to 4. Additionally, a new high school graduation test given in grade 11 assesses language arts, math, science, social studies, health and writing.

Georgia also received a five-year, $10 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. "The Georgia Initiative in Mathematics and Science aims to create a stimulating climate in which all students will use their minds well, take responsibility for their lives and contribute positively to the global community," according to NSF state profiles.

Grant activities include: developing a preservice teacher education program to promote diversity within all teacher-education programs; promoting teacher development through the drafting of "Principles of Educating Teachers"; recruiting and retaining minorities to teach science and math; developing a "learning framework" in mathematics and science; and improving student assessment, as well as other activities aimed at supporting systemic change and strengthening partnerships.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Charter schools
- Workforce skills
- Early childhood education
- Postsecondary aid
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant

Hawaii

Current reform efforts focus on decentralization and empowerment to enhance student achievement in a safe and conducive environment.

Following the 1988 passage of a school/community-based management law, Hawaii expected to have 90% of its 240 schools moving toward local management during the 1993-94 school year. Principals, teachers, school staff, parents, students and community members are involved.

The state also proposes to reduce the state education department's management from three to two levels, create school-run support centers and provide school-based lump-sum budgeting. More than 57% of each school's budget will be controlled by the school.

Under 1989 legislation, Hawaii is helping develop and implement the school/community-based management system. The legislation required the board of education to establish policy to define a common set of education goals which all schools subject to the school/community-based management system will be responsible for fulfilling. The board also is to formulate standards for measuring each participating school's efforts to achieve defined goals each year.

Students who fail the multiple-choice phase of the Hawaii State Test of Essential Competencies, which is required for high school graduation, must take part in performance assessments. Students perform tasks at 23 stations in the "Essential Competencies Certification Center." They have unlimited time and receive instruction through earphones, recorded messages and print.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Governance

Idaho

The Idaho State Board of Education is attempting to change the state's education system from one based on inputs, such as seat time, to one based on performance. A statewide Goals and Testing Commission, appointed by the state board of education, has established a set of five test questions to measure the six outcomes. The test was pilot tested by 1,500 students in 44 schools in 1993.

In 1991, the state legislature appropriated $950,000 and in 1992, another $2 million to implement 12 priorities identified in "Idaho's Strategic Plan — Schools for 2000 and Beyond." The Schools 2000 Committee, which wrote the report, has worked with the Goals and Testing Commission to encourage schools to develop their own strategic plans consistent with state priorities. The plan focuses on systemic change and supports a performance-based approach to education.

The state is supporting these activities through regional workshops on performance-based education and through the use of 20 regional and school innovation pilot projects.

Reform issues

- Performance-based initiative
- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Choice

Illinois

Three state statutes are driving education reform in Illinois public schools: the 1985 Education Reform Act, the 1988 Chicago School Reform Act and the 1991 Standards for Schools Act. Together, these three statutes: (1) established state goals for learning in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, fine arts, and physical development and health; (2) created the Illinois Goals Assessment Program to measure student achievement of the goals in language arts (reading and writing), mathematics, science and social studies at designated grade levels; (3) shifted the focus of accountability from the district to the school; and (4) reconstituted the school recognition system to accredit individual schools on the basis of school and student performance and improvement of school performance.

The statutes further call for individual schools to set learning goals, assess student performance, and develop and implement instructional improvement plans within the statewide parameters and guidelines set by the state board of education.

Governor Jim Edgar is working to establish "learning zones." Like enterprise zones, which free up economic activity within a neighborhood, learning zones would coordinate education and human services and economic activities within a neighborhood, using the local school as the focus of activities. A state commission is exploring the concept

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Governance (Chicago)
- Accountability
- Workforce skills
- Re:Learning state
- Choice (piloting)

Indiana

Indiana's A+ Program for Educational Excellence, passed in 1987, set up a performance-based school accreditation system. The state established the Indiana Statewide Testing of Educational Progress (ISTEP), which included testing of higher-level cognitive skills. It also established performance-based rewards for schools improving student attendance, math and English/language arts performance, and average ISTEP scores across grade levels tested.

The House Enrolled Act 1695, passed in the 1993 legislative session, changed the timeline for ISTEP implementation, so it will be administered for the first time in 1995-96. ISTEP will include a 10th-grade "Gateway Test," first used for students graduating during 1997-98. Students who fail the Gateway Test may appeal the results on the grounds that they do not accurately reflect the student's achievements on required skills. Students who fail the English/language arts or the mathematics requirements of the test must take high school courses in the subjects they fail. The new test is to include multiple-choice, short-answer and performance-assessment sections. The Gateway Test is part of a workforce initiative that will direct students toward academic or vocational-technological preparation after 10th grade.

Senate Enrolled Act 65, also passed in the 1993 legislative session, allows high school juniors and seniors to earn up to two credits toward high school graduation for community or volunteer service. Students and community-service organizations must apply for school permission to receive credit. In addition, students must work at least 48 hours for each credit, and the school must supervise and evaluate the work.

Earlier legislation established the Indiana 2000 program, which granted schools waivers from regulations. The Workforce Development Act set up a task force to work on new standards and assessment procedures. The state has established a teacher professional standards board and is implementing a performance-based accreditation system, developed by the Indiana Department of Education.

State Re:Learning efforts have focused on reconciling ongoing reform strategies. These activities have linked higher education, business and industry and groups developing workforce skills.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Workforce skills
- Re:Learning state
- Professional development

Iowa

The Iowa Omnibus Educational Improvement Act of 1987 required school district boards of directors to adopt student achievement goals for improvement in education skills at each grade level.

More recently, Iowa's chief state school officer delayed state work on performance-based education because of the lack of public and political support for a performance- or outcome-based reform. The state board had passed a proposal with nine learning goals. Iowa also has school choice, as well as limited postsecondary open enrollment, allowing high school students to attend institutions of higher education prior to graduation when appropriate.

Also, Iowa recently rewrote the special education rule in the state's administrative code. A renewed service-delivery system calls for site-based decisionmaking, meaningful assessment, frequent program monitoring and improved parent participation.

Reform issues

- Accountability
- Workforce skills
- Choice
- New Standards Project

Kansas

In 1993, the Kansas State Board of Education raised the basic-skills scores required for certification of teachers. The new certification requirements complement teacher education admission standards approved earlier by the state board of regents.

In 1992, the Kansas State Department of Education adopted plans for "Quality Performance Accreditation." When fully developed, schools will identify performance outcomes that all students will be required to meet for high school graduation. Assessments will be performance-based.

In addition, school accreditation will be tied to success in reaching their outcomes, plus 10 designated by the state. Each of these outcomes is accompanied by standards and indicators to help identify school progress toward the outcomes. Schools must evaluate themselves and report progress to receive state funding and to remain accredited. In 1993-94, 250 districts were involved; by 1994-95, all districts will begin the process. The outcomes are:

1. Teachers establish high expectations for learning and monitor student achievement through multiple assessment techniques.
2. Schools have a basic mission which prepares the learners to live, learn and work in a global society.
3. Schools provide learning activities within an orderly and safe environment which is conducive to learning.
4. Schools provide instructional leadership which results in improved student performance in an effective school environment.
5. Students have the communication skills necessary to live, learn and work in a global society.
6. Students think creatively and problem solve in order to live, learn and work in a global society.
7. Students work effectively both independently and in groups in order to live, learn and work in a global society.

8. Students have the physical and emotional well being necessary to live, learn and work in a global society.
9. All staff engage in ongoing professional development based on the outcomes identified in the school-improvement plan.
10. Students participate in lifelong learning.

Staff development is left up to local districts and schools to design, but increased staff development is one of the school outcomes to be measured for accreditation. These programs will be outcomes-based.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Performance-based initiative

Kentucky The Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) of 1990 came about after the courts declared the entire Kentucky education system unconstitutional. Going beyond the plaintiffs' call for equalized funding in the state, KERA resulted in major reforms on many levels. Funding has been largely equalized as a result of the reform, and the state Board for Elementary and Secondary Education has been charged with developing and implementing a statewide, primarily performance-based, assessment program. The assessment system is to be based on measurable outcomes defined by the Council on School Performance Standards, created by KERA.

KERA also required the state board of education to establish a system to determine successful schools and dispense appropriate rewards and sanctions, as well as to determine "schools in crises." The reward system is to be based on the following: (1) a school is to be the unit of accountability; (2) school success is to be determined by measuring improvement on the state assessment over a two-year period; (3) a school is to be rewarded for increasing the proportion of successful students, including those students who are at risk of school failure; (4) a threshold level for school improvement is to be established for each school to determine the amount of success needed for a school to receive a reward; (5) the threshold definition must establish the percentage of increase required in a school's proportion of successful students as compared to its present proportion. Schools closer to having 100% success will have a lower percentage increase required.

The Kentucky Instructional Results Information System Student Assessment (KIRIS), part of KERA, tests students in grades 4, 8 and 12. It has three components: (1) a transitional component paralleling the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). This component provides national NAEP-like comparisons and consists of commonly administered multiple-choice and open-ended tasks and matrix-sampled multiple-choice and open-ended items (reading, writing, math, science and social studies); (2) performance-based events consisting of "on-demand" tasks administered on a specific date in the school with the assistance of an outside facilitator in math, science and social studies; (3) portfolio assessment, currently consisting of a writing portfolio. Other areas will be included shortly.

KERA also required that student assessment be primarily performance-based by 1995-96. Performance-based events and portfolio assessment components will be expanded to include reading and interdisciplinary studies. The portfolio assessment component will be expanded to include math with developmental work in practical living and vocational education and the humanities and arts. Initial results from the 4th, 8th and 12th grades were reported this year.

KERA also extended early childhood education, provided for family resource centers and extended school services. One result of the extended school services and after-school and Saturday programs has been higher grades among participating students.

Under the new state funding formula, professional development is receiving $25 per student per teacher. Due to delays in the development of criteria for technology acquisition, and slower than anticipated planning for its implementation, the improved technology envisioned under KERA is lagging behind the other elements of reform.

KERA also established an Office of Education Accountability within the state legislature. The unique office is to designed to investigate mismanagement, fraud and other related problems across the state, and it can initiate legal action against offenders.

Kentucky also received a five-year, $9.6 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. Under the grant, "the Partnership for Reform Initiatives in Science and Mathematics will ensure that all Kentucky students will have the knowledge, understanding and skills to participate in a technology-based 21st Century. Through this endeavor, there will be an increase in literacy and numeracy, educational participation -- especially among minorities, women and economically disadvantaged persons -- and the public's valuing of education," according to NSF state profiles. Activities include: professional development, identifying and supporting models for reform, and implementing a comprehensive communication strategy.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance-based initiative
- Accountability
- Choice (for schools determined to be in crisis according to test results from the KERA reforms)
- Governance
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- New Standards Project
- Equity in school funding

Louisiana

The Louisiana reform bill approved in 1988, Act #659, under a section called School Excellence, provided for establishment of a standardized data-collection system. The department of education was charged with collecting the following information: (1) results of all state-required tests; (2) composite and subtest means for college-bound students, including ACT scores and mean scores for students enrolled in the core college-preparatory curriculum; (3) number of National Merit Scholarship semi-finalists; (4) dropout rates; (5) student and faculty attendance rates; (6) graduation rates; (7) number of students in advanced-placement classes; (8) number of teachers by type of teaching certificate and other credentials.

The department of education also was required to prepare and produce annual progress profiles on every public school and school district in the state.

In addition, Louisiana received a five-year, $10 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. At the heart of the Louisiana Systemic Initiatives Program (LaSIP) is a "standards based classroom reform of grades 4-8 mathematics and science. Consistent with evolving

national standards, LaSIP recognizes that long-term reform involves a massive change of school and higher education culture, at all levels, toward critical thinking and problem solving and away from rote learning and memorized algorithms. LaSIP is seeking to help reinvent professional development for teachers consistent with this vision of the future," says NSF's state profiles. Activities include educational technology and networking, regional partnerships and information dissemination for public awareness.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Postsecondary open enrollment
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant

Maine Maine's Common Core of Learning, developed by a governor-established commission in 1990, lays out the knowledge, skills and attitudes that all students are expected to acquire in four disciplinary categories. The four areas are: personal and global stewardship, communication, reasoning and problem solving, and the human record. These four areas cover the traditional subject areas of social studies, applied technology and vocational education, creative and performing arts, English language arts, foreign languages, human growth and development, mathematics, and science and technology.

A subsequent document, *Success Begins with Education*, provided further detail regarding how to implement the Common Core, including 15 goals. The goals deal with:

1. Common Core of Learning outcomes
2. Certificates of initial mastery for high achievement
3. Variety of transitional learning environments
4. Criteria for school success: equity, quality, mastery and school-to-school or school-to-work transition
5. Measuring school success
6. School accountability
7. Change and innovation at the school site
8. Preparing tomorrow's educators
9. Building capacity in today's educators
10. Success through technology
11. Readiness to learn
12. Parents as partners in education
13. Parent choice of public schools
14. Communities as partners in education
15. Making employers partners in education.

Maine's educational assessment uses performance tasks in all academic subjects in grades 4, 8 and 11. The assessments were developed by Maine educators and the Maine Department of Education. Open-ended responses are scored by external consultants. Writing sections are persuasive and narrative scored by a contractor in conjunction with teachers. Assessment of small groups is being piloted.

In 1993, the Maine legislature passed Chapter 209, which strengthened the state board of education and created a task force to help the board restructure education. The task force is to produce a five year plan for outcome-based education in the state, with recommendations due in 1994.

Maine also received a five-year, $10 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. Under the grant, "Maine envisions people working together. Teachers, parents and other community figures provide models of lifelong learning to children, with parents and teachers coordinating opportunities for children's learning. Schools are laboratories for learning and exploration and are structured to reflect the real world. Professionals join with local educators and public figures to achieve common goals for education," according to NSF state profiles. Activities include: "Beacon Sites," with a facilitator at schools to help with development and dissemination of methods and materials; summer apprenticeship programs; science and mathematics academies for K-12 teachers; and collaboration with higher education.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance-based initiative
- Accountability
- Curriculum frameworks
- Governance
- Workforce skills
- Re:Learning state
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- New Standards Project

Maryland

The Public School Improvement Act of 1985 included provisions for school and district evaluations; curriculum assessments for students in selected curriculum areas at three grade levels; and basic-skills tests in reading, writing and mathematics at three grade levels. The act's purpose is to identify students in need of remedial instruction.

The Maryland School Performance Assessment Program assesses progress toward curricular outcomes. Teachers develop and score the assessments with consultants and the state department of education. Integrated reading, writing, language arts and math performance assessments have been piloted in grades 3, 5 and 8. Functional tests are required for graduation, including reading, writing, math and social studies in grades 9 through 12.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Workforce skills

Massachusetts The Massachusetts Educational Reform Act of 1993 required the board of education to produce internationally competitive statewide content standards. The standards will be reviewed every two years. Additionally, the board is to create curriculum frameworks, which will be designed to ensure academic excellence and bring curriculum up to international standards. The frameworks also will be reviewed every two years.

The board also will create assessments that will include work samples, projects or portfolios. Assessments will be administered at grade 10 and at least two other grades as determined by the board. The board will publish results of statewide assessments within six months of administration.

The board also is scheduled to adopt Certificates of Initial Mastery, which will ensure proficiency in core subjects. Certificates of Advanced Mastery will be designed to measure exemplary performance, and Certificates of Occupational Proficiency will demonstrate proficiency in at least six occupational fields.

The new bill's reporting mechanisms provide parents with improved information about school performance to help people choose schools. The legislation also provides for the secretary of education to approve up to 25 charter schools in Massachusetts, to be dispersed geographically.

The 1993 legislation also eliminated existing teacher tenure laws. Instead, an "inexpensive and expeditious system of arbitration of dismissals before an impartial third party" will be in place. Under the new bill, teachers with one year of experience will be given professional teacher status, at which time they may be dismissed for inefficiency, incompetence, incapacity, conduct unbecoming a teacher, insubordination, failure to satisfy teacher performance standards or other just causes. Superintendents, not school committees, are charged to evaluate teachers and principals against performance standards.

In 1992, Massachusetts received a five-year, $10 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. Under the grant, Massachusetts proposes that "all Massachusetts students will have access to the richness of the commonwealth's mathematical, scientific and technologic resources and, through hands-on learning, be able to use mathematics and science principles to solve problems in their daily lives," according to NSF state profiles. Activities include: partnerships, demonstration sites, curriculum frameworks, professional development, preservice teacher preparation, telecommunications networks, community outreach, and evaluations and assessment.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance-based initiative
- Accountability
- Choice
- Charter schools
- Workforce skills
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- New Standards Project

Michigan Michigan has five major pieces of reform legislation:

1. State essential goals for subjects
2. Michigan Educational Assessment Program in science, math, reading
3. Public Act 25, which established a model core curriculum
4. A high school proficiency test, established in 1991, when the state department needed an exit exam for grade 11
5. Recent legislation dealing with curriculum and assessment, choice, charters and finance.

The essential goals and objectives are set for reading, math and science. Each is revised every five years, with curriculum experts from the state department of education working with people in other areas. The state also has a statewide assessment. Because state aid to districts was tied to the assessment, districts put more emphasis on that assessment.

Public Act 25 provided a core curriculum, which districts could adopt or develop their own version. The core curriculum reflects the essential goals and objectives, but states them as outcomes. The core includes language arts, math, science and world studies. Interdisciplinary subjects include life management, vocational preparation, employability, aesthetics appreciation and technology. The state relied on inducements to encourage districts to implement the core curriculum. Districts had to submit their own model by 1993 or lose a percentage of state aid.

The high school proficiency test originally called for students to pass by 1997 tests of communication arts (reading, writing), science and mathematics in order to get a diploma. That idea since has been scaled back. Students who do particularly well on their proficiency test will receive an endorsement by subject on their diploma, but students who fail the test will still graduate.

In late 1993, the state passed legislation preparing for the establishment of a new curriculum by 1997-98 in eight subjects. It also established a performance-standard committee to develop pupil-performance standards for district consideration by 1995.

In addition, Michigan is developing new market mechanisms to encourage innovation in schools, including charter schools and schools of choice. Central to the recent reform was the reconfiguration of school funding. The state's personal property tax was replaced largely by a sales tax following a 1994 referendum.

In 1992, Michigan received a five-year, $9.9 million National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative (NSF SSI) grant. Under the grant, Michigan "will implement a strategic and comprehensive reform of mathematics and science education for all K-12 students." In an effort to achieve scientific literacy and mathematical power for all students, Michigan's SSI will coordinate existing policy initiatives with curricular, leadership and partnership initiatives to support school-based change in mathematics and science education, according to NSF's state profiles. Activities include: models of effective learning, professional development and dissemination, and communications through a speakers' bureau and materials.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance-based initiative
- Accountability
- Choice
- Charter schools
- Funding
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative Grant

Minnesota Education reform in Minnesota is being pursued via a new requirement for graduation. Now in its third draft, the "Learning for Success" program was originally referred to as the Outcome-Based Graduation Rule, then the Graduation Rule. While the requirement has gone through a couple of significant revisions, as of October 1993, the plan was to create a set of comprehensive outcomes and content outcomes at the state level. Local educators would determine assessments, which would measure two of the comprehensive outcomes and all of the content outcomes.

The state also has gone from a plan to evaluate students on the basis of three performance levels to one single standard. Michigan appropriated $10 million to establish school sites where teachers can work on implementing the standards and developing model assessments from which other schools and districts could learn later.

A. Comprehensive outcomes
   1. Thinks purposefully
   2. Directs own learning
   3. Communicates effectively
   4. Works productively with others (including ability to work well with people from diverse backgrounds)
   5. Acts responsibly as a citizen (including demonstrated respect for human differences and leadership on behalf of the common good)
   6. Makes lifework decisions (including understanding workforce and societal trends)

B. Content outcomes
   1. Applies reading strategies appropriate to the material and purpose
   2. Applies writing strategies appropriate to the audience and purpose
   3. Applies speaking strategies appropriate to the audience and purpose
   4. Applies listening strategies appropriate to the material and purpose
   5. Applies critical viewing strategies appropriate to the circumstances and purpose
   6. Applies number sense, number relationships and a variety of computational procedures
   7. Analyzes patterns and functional relationships in order to solve problems and model cause/effect interactions
   8. Applies concepts of randomness and uncertainty to make predictions and decisions based on probabilities

9. Applies concepts of shape and space to illustrate and describe the physical world and solve problems involving multidimensional space
10. Applies data-handling and measurement techniques to solve problems and justify conclusions
11. Understands scientific inquiry
12. Understands relationships between living things and their environment
13. Understands the physical world
14. Understands the relationship among earth's physical features and people across cultures and time
15. Understands the past and continuous development of societies and cultures from diverse and global perspectives
16. Understands the interaction of people and economic, political and governmental systems
17. Understands stewardship for the environment
18. Understands the meaning and diversity of artistic expression
19. Understands technological systems and applications
20. Demonstrates abilities to integrate physical, emotional and social wellness
21. Understands the effective management of resources in a household, business, community and government.
22. In another language, applies listening strategies appropriate to the material and purpose
23. In another language, applies speaking strategies appropriate to the audience and purpose
24. In another language, applies reading strategies appropriate to the materials and purpose
25. In another language, applies writing strategies appropriate to the audience and purpose

In addition to developing the new graduation requirements, the Minnesota Legislature authorized funds to the Minnesota Department of Education for the development and piloting of "curriculum frameworks" that will include ways to assess student progress on each outcome. The process is to culminate in a graduation rule that will become effective in 1996 for the graduating class of 2000.

The Minnesota Statewide Essential Learner Outcomes assessment, which is tied to the new graduation requirements, includes enhanced multiple-choice questions to measure higher-order thinking skills in mathematics, writing samples and literature passages to assess reading.

Every district must have a committee composed of community and school-based personnel to evaluate, improve, reevaluate and report assessment outcomes. The assessments are used to establish state norms and accountability.

Staff development tied to the new system is left to districts to provide with existing resources. However, the 1993 legislature voted $10 million to support these activities, with $4.4 million going to pilot sites to develop standards, assessments and staff development.

Minnesota also passed the nation's first charter schools legislation in 1991, permitting eight schools to be established. In 1993, the number was increased to 20 statewide.

The 1993 omnibus K-12 education finance bill also included exploration of alternative ways to deliver special education services in Minnesota. The legislation authorized 11 districts and one rural special education cooperative to test ways to provide the same intent and quality of special education services, free of rules and mandates that prescribe procedure.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance-based initiative
- Accountability
- Charter schools
- Choice

Mississippi

In July 1993, the Mississippi state education superintendent approved a Norm-Referenced Assessment Implementation Committee. The superintendent also is piloting a technical-preparation program. The 15 pilot sites are implementing the first year's activities, including: goals suggested by the Southern Regional Education Board; contextual teaching in Algebra I, Biology and English I; secondary and postsecondary articulation; teacher teams; and career centers.

Mississippi BEST, approved in 1990, included a provision to link high school graduation with opportunities for higher education, job training and employment.

The legislature is exploring ways to expand the state's accountability system, while the state department of education is restructuring to provide more support and assistance and be less regulatory.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Accountability

Missouri

The Missouri Education Reform and Quality Improvement Act of 1993 established a Commission on Performance which is to help the state board implement systemic reforms. Through the commission, the state board is to establish no more than 75 academic performance standards that establish the knowledge, skills and competencies students must demonstrate to advance through the public education system and become responsible members of society. The state board will convene work groups, mostly teachers, to assist in development of academic performance standards. The state board also will develop model curriculum frameworks which incorporate academic performance standards and a statewide assessment system which will provide maximum flexibility for local school districts to determine the degree to which students are meeting performance standards. Local districts are required to allocate 1% of money received for professional development.

The 1993 act also required districts to report to their community on a district and school basis for the most recently completed year and preceding school year. Report cards must include information on enrollment, attendance, promotion, dropout rates, student-teacher ratios, overall district performance and test scores.

In addition, the legislation spelled out criteria under which the state may take over academically deficient schools and established a small charter school program in the state.

Under the 1993 legislation, schools are also to issue "guaranteed diplomas" in which they guarantee that graduates have attained basic skills and knowledge. Employers or colleges identifying a Missouri high school graduate who has not taken the GED and who is believed to be deficient in basic skills can refer the graduate to any school district or state-approved adult basic education site. If the

graduate cannot demonstrate proficieney on the GED, the district from which the graduate received his/her diploma must provide remediation or bear the costs of remediation provided by any Missouri school district or state-approved adult basic education program.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance-based initiative
- Charter schools
- Accountability
- Workforce skills
- Re:Learning state
- Professional development
- New Standards Project

Montana A joint resolution passed by the legislature last session began a study of implementation of school and family service centers which would provide coordinated social services at or near school sites.

The governor also plans to conduct a study of the public perception of school reform needs and a survey of business' education concerns.

In 1991, Montana received a five-year, $10 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. Under the grant, "the Systemic Initiative for Montana Mathematics and Science will restructure mathematics education in Montana through an integrated approach. In addition, science education will consider a non-layer cake approach to integration. All children will be able to solve complex problems; will have a vision of the interrelatedness of the world, nature and human cultures; and will become lifelong learners so they can adapt to accelerating change," according to NSF state profiles. Activities include: creating a mathematics curriculum for grades 9-12 and a state steering committee; providing technology grants to 45 diverse schools; training 36 teacher leaders; setting up technology laboratories on two university campuses; creating an internal communications system; and collaborating with the American Indians in Mathematics Project.

Reform issue

- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant

Nebraska The Nebraska Department of Education is developing an alternative to Carnegie units which could be used to determine student achievement. The alternative system would assess Nebraska students on the basis of what they know and are able to do, rather than on how many classes they attended.

The Nebraska Center for Excellence in Education, a consortium of public school districts and other organizations established in 1979 to promote educational excellence in Nebraska's public schools, has a major reform program under way. The program is a 10-year emphasis on school restructuring known as "A Decade of Change: Preparing Nebraska Students for the 21st Century." The 25 member districts each specify what they plan to do in the following areas by the year 2000:

1. Audiences. Specify priority audiences for improved or expanded school programs, paying particular attention to the increasing numbers of students at risk, the changing nature of the labor force and the expanding needs for more early childhood education.
2. Learning outcomes. Define what students should know in terms of learning outcomes, not just the "inputs" into the learning process.
3. Measuring performance. Find valid methods to measure school performance in both quantitative and qualitative ways.
4. Accountability. Specify those areas in which schools will be held accountable for their performance, keyed to outcomes.
5. Better intervention. Stress better and earlier diagnosis and intervention for students with learning problems, through what happens in the school and what the school does with parents or other responsible adults at home.
6. Restructuring. Adopt new techniques for organizing and structuring schools, anchored in models of shared decisionmaking and stressing community involvement.

A recent referendum earmarked one-half of the state's lottery revenues for a $7-9 million fund for school innovation. The state also has received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to develop mathematics and science curriculum frameworks for adaptation and use by school districts. The $192,567 grant will be used over three years to create guidelines for improvement of teacher education and designs for professional development. K-12 teachers, teacher trainers, school board members, administrators, students, and leaders from communities, businesses and industries will collaborate on the new curriculum frameworks.

In 1991, Nebraska received a five-year, $10 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative (SSI) grant. According to NSF state profiles, "The Nebraska SSI is dedicated to making available a high-quality mathematics and science education to every student, kindergarten through college. Special emphasis will be placed on providing access for women and minorities." Activities include: a K-12 teacher and curriculum enhancement project, a five-part mathematics curriculum resource, practical precollege mathematics, geometry for elementary teachers, electronic networking and public-awareness activities. The project involves partnerships among 11 school districts, a middle-school curriculum enrichment program, 12th-grade mathematics course to be televised, electronic computer network and a videotape series on integrating technology into K-12 classrooms.

Reform issues

- Accountability
- Choice
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant

Nevada The Nevada State Department of Education expanded school accountability by making it easier to compare and share information among schools and districts. In particular, data on attendance and student mobility have improved because of increased agreement on definitions and uniform data-collection strategies. The improved data have been useful in understanding dramatically changing demographic conditions in the state. Schools also must report specific information on educational quality and pupil achievement.

The state has devoted resources to decreasing the student-to-teacher ratio in grades K-3. The objective is to achieve ratios of 15 to 1 for all four grades. Currently, class sizes have been reduced in kindergarten through grade 2 to the 15-to-1 ratio, and the state is working to extend that reduction in size to grade 3.

In the 1993 legislative session, the state passed two pieces of legislation on site-based management of schools. Assembly Bill #290 set up parameters for what can and cannot be managed by local schools within the areas of instruction, budgets and scheduling. Senate Bill #91 established a mechanism for designating which schools in the state are going to be self-managed and operate within parameters set in the assembly bill.

Reform issues

- K-3 student/teacher ratio reduction
- Governance
- Accountability

New Hampshire

New Hampshire has created a statewide network for the development and implementation of technical-preparation programs in its high schools and colleges. Two regional consortia were established in 1991, and three other regional support organizations help the state's schools implement tech-prep strategies.

The state department of education is restructuring to be more of a service and assistance agency.

Reform issues

- Accountability
- Workforce skills

New Jersey

New Jersey has an "academic bankruptcy" mechanism for taking over failing districts. Since its adoption in 1988, two districts (Jersey City and Patterson) have been taken over and remain in state control.

A statewide monitoring and accountability system approved in 1990, and signed into law in 1991, expanded the state goals a district must meet to be certified. Those goals include reading, writing, mathematics, science and health, geography, history, civics, physical education and the arts. The system required that the extent to which these goals are met must be based on new state performance standards. A task force was set up to determine standards and the criteria for their assessment. In 1992, the New Jersey Board of Education approved a new monitoring system to take effect in FY 1993-94. This system required districts to set student achievement standards in major subject areas to be measured in 4th, 8th and 12th grades.

In 1993, New Jersey received a five-year, $10 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. Under the grant, New Jersey wants to encourage "all children to value mathematics and science as useful subjects, allowing students to learn in cooperative and exploratory ways . . . integrating the use of technology into learning, encouraging risk-taking and experimentation in K-12 instruction, developing alternative assessments, strengthening the continuing professional development of teachers, raising school expectations and improving access to quality instruction for females and under represented minorities," according to NSF state profiles. Activities include a K-8

program to empower teachers, K-12 structural reform in selected districts, and statewide policy-level work to improve public awareness and foster activity by the New Jersey Department of Education.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance-based initiative
- Accountability
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant

New Mexico New Mexico mandated a system of institutional annual report cards in 1990. The law (Section 22-1-6, NMSA) required the state education department and each of the 88 districts to annually inform parents, citizens and public officials of the status and progress of education. Some of the information provided includes descriptions of exemplary programs, student trends, achievement and financial data, and results from the New Mexico Department of Education's Quality of Education Survey.

In 1992, the state board of education also approved a set of goals which the state department of education is to carry out. The goals are listed in a "student-centered policy framework for systemwide change," detailed in a document called "Consolidating Initiatives for Tomorrow's Education" (CITE). Eight goals are listed:

1. Involve all New Mexicans in a shared responsibility for education.
2. Provide opportunities which will enable all students to learn.
3. Establish high standards and high expectations to enable students to acquire the personal qualities, values, skills and knowledge necessary to become productive citizens in a multiethnic democratic society.
4. Seek and reward excellence in teachers and other school personnel.
5. Advocate for and seek adequate resources to support maximum student learning.
6. Organize resources for systemwide change to prepare students for the future.
7. Promote, exemplify and implement decisionmaking at the appropriate level.
8. Assure to the public the integrity of the educational process through program and financial accountability.

Under this plan, the state education department has three components for which it is responsible: standards for excellence, competency framework and outcome-based accreditation model. The districts are left with a selection of tools and guides on how best to implement these reforms. The standards support the CITE plan by grouping student outcomes by three categories: literacies, attitudes and attributes.

Other legislation passed in 1993, House Bill #888, allowed the establishment of up to five charter schools in the state.

In 1992, the state developed competency frameworks. These frameworks provide the foundation for designing site-based curriculum so that students can achieve the exemplary outcomes. Values expressed include: K-12 articulation and planning; high expectations; widespread responsibility, interdisciplinary, developmentally appropriate curricula, equal outcomes; student focus; and success for everyone. Each framework (art, health, interscholastic, language arts, life, math, modern and classical

languages, music, physical education, science and social studies) includes a list of outcomes grouped under headings such as knowledge and understanding, development of values, development of skills, general competencies and essential competencies.

The state department's outcome-based accreditation standards, established in 1993, are used in the process by a portion of New Mexico districts each year. Districts must complete a self-study and submit it to the accreditation team coordinator one month prior to the site visit. They use the self-studies to develop an "Education Plan for Student Success." The study has five parts: local insights, standards for excellence, indicators of success, legislative mandates and focus areas.

The state also is piloting a portfolio assessment program and has legislated decentralized decisionmaking.

In 1992, New Mexico also received a five-year, $9.9 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative (SSI) grant. New Mexico's SSI envisions "a student-centered, hands-on education model that will raise interest in and achievement by all students in mathematics and science in grades K-8.

These efforts will be coordinated with other statewide reform efforts through a state-level council of stakeholders," according to NSF state profiles. Activities include: work with a council of business and educational leadership to clarify its role and help with activities, such as Re:Learning; Comprehensive Regional Centers for Minorities and New Mexico Partnership; communications work; teacher enhancement; and policy and program work.

The state's Re:Learning effort has focused on avoiding policy that restricts schools and has assisted in the development of cross-unit teams which help restructuring schools in more effective ways.

In 1991, the legislature passed House Memorial 63. This memorial requested the state board of education to coordinate all school restructuring efforts to achieve America's long-term education goals and to work cooperatively with all segments of New Mexico's education system to put forth a vision of comprehensive, systemic change.

The governor's education initiatives include a Children, Youth and Families Department which he established to coordinate collaborative services.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance-based initiative
- Accountability
- Charter schools
- Re:Learning state
- National Education Goals
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant

New York New York State adopted a New Compact for Learning in 1991. The compact is a comprehensive strategy for improving public elementary, middle and secondary education results in the 1990s. Some of the compact's provisions include recommendations to define desired education results in specific terms; to devise means of assessment that will guide activity and promote accountability; involve teachers and parents in planning and decisionmaking for schools; provide local school districts with greater flexibility to modify education programs in order to improve results; and promote closer collaboration between the schools and institutions of higher education.

To support the compact, a statewide Curriculum and Assessment Council was charged with recommending desired learning outcomes and a new assessment program to measure progress toward them. In 1992, the council released an interim report called *Building a Learning-Centered Curriculum for Learner-Centered Schools*. The report provided recommendations in the following key areas: student learning outcomes and standards, curriculum frameworks, assessment of student learning and shared accountability and implementation. Some of the issues the council expects to address in its next report are links to current and national assessments, preparation of students for work, need for intensive staff development, meeting of federal requirements and a timeframe for implementation.

Another statewide forum created in 1991, the Task Force on Creating Career Pathways for New York State Youth, was charged with critiquing the methods used to prepare young people for work. The task force's 1992 report, *Education That Works: Creating Career Pathways for New York State Youth*, proposed to replace the current education structure with an integrated, flexible system of education, training and work. The Pathways report featured three sequential benchmarks of student progress: a Career Pathways Certificate (CPC) attesting to student mastery of academic fundamentals and entry level workplace skills, a high school diploma for students demonstrating mastery of academic and employability skills beyond the criteria for a CPC or a current diploma, and an optional nonbaccalaureate Professional and Technical Certificate based on industry- and labor-defined, globally competitive standards in specific fields.

In his 1993 report to the legislature, New York's governor called for implementation of the Pathways agenda and its assimilation into the compact.

The New York Board of Regents and the Curriculum and Assessment Council are working to further define a policy on workforce preparation. The issues they will address include: determining workforce competencies and setting standards, introducing students to work, providing instruction and informing students about careers, assessing student progress and program effectiveness, providing staff development and support, marking student accomplishment and making connections among professionals.

In 1993, New York received a five-year, $10 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. NSF's state profiles note that under the grant, New York State's Urban Network Project (UNP) "addresses these essential components of systemic change: (1) structure adopting A New Compact for Learning, which provides a framework that enables schools to restructure ... (2) practices ... for changes to take place in the way mathematics, science and technology are taught and learned ... (3) culture ... the culture which the UNP is designed to stimulate has as its core the first principles of the compact: 'all children can learn and can succeed.'" Activities include research and development on urban partnerships, preservice education and infrastructure and accountability changes.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Workforce skills
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- New Standards Project

North Carolina

Legislation passed in 1993 required outcomes-based education (OBE). The legislature set aside $3 million for nine districts to experiment with the program. It also established a State Education Standards and Accountability Commission to "focus on setting standards for what children should know and be able to do in order to be competitive in the workforce of the future."

Staff development must be planned to "develop understanding of OBE concepts, related roles and necessary changes for effective performance, and provide professional growth and improvement within and throughout the system," according to the legislation. A criterion-based, consistently applied system of assessments, performance standards, student credentialing and reporting matched to exit outcomes and proficiencies also is to be developed.

About $2 million were designated for professional development for "retraining teachers to meet the current demands for accountability and higher standards" and creating a "statewide network of high quality, integrated comprehensive collaborative and sustained professional development for teachers in school committee leadership and core content areas."

In July 1992, the legislature created the Educational Leadership Task Force "to identify how to best select, train, assess and regulate persons to become competent, motivated and trusted education leaders." The task force included state board members, members of the University of North Carolina board of governors, legislators, professional school professors, local school staff members and officials, and business and industry representatives. The task force was charged with improving school leadership with changing roles of principals and administrators, given expanding parent roles in school management. In February 1993, the task force made 10 recommendations designed to improve the quality of administrators. The recommendations charged the state board of governors to:

1. Bring the supply and demand for school administrators into better balance.
2. Reduce the number of preparation programs in the public system by at least 50%.
3. Develop a plan to have the various campuses compete for authorization to offer administrator preparation programs.
4. More strictly apply program-approval standards to administrator preparation programs.
5. Change budgeting to enhance resources for leadership development.
6. Establish a working committee to address selection criteria.

The task force also recommended:

7. Funding of full time graduate work opportunities for potential leaders.
8. An independent professional standards board for school administration.
9. Increased professional development for existing administrators.
10. Help for local education agencies in developing procedures to hire the best qualified candidates.

The state also passed legislation in 1993 eliminating tenure for principals and administrators and increasing funding for early childhood education.

In 1991, North Carolina received a five-year, $7.8 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. Under the grant, "The North Carolina Science and Mathematics Alliance envisions (1) A transformation of science and mathematics instruction into active, inquiry-based explorations and problem solving conducted by students and guided by confident and well-equipped teachers; (2) all students achieving success and satisfaction in science, mathematics and technology; and (3) all stakeholders aware of and actively involved in the delivery and support of excellent science and mathematics teaching and learning," according to NSF state profiles. Activities include: school-based support, gender/ethnic access and teacher-industry changes. Ten regional partnerships will address local needs.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance-based initiative
- Accountability
- Workforce skills
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant

North Dakota

In 1991, the state legislature directed the state education superintendent to prepare for the development of student performance standards, assessments and participatory school decisionmaking. Since then, guidelines have been released for participatory school decisionmaking, and a council was constituted to research and prepare for the development of student performance standards.

In addition, the North Dakota Curriculum Council is developing curriculum frameworks which include content outcomes and performance standards in math, science, language arts, social studies and library media. Development of student assessment models began in 1993.

The state also has adopted graduation outcomes which specify that each student will have the ability to:

1. Apply concepts, generalizations, processes and strategies considered important to specific content areas.
2. Use complex reasoning processes.
3. Work in a cooperative/collaborative manner.
4. Be self-directed in a variety of situations.
5. Communicate through a variety of products.
6. Gather information in a variety of ways.

The state education department also is exploring ways to assist schools in their restructuring efforts and to help them implement the new system being developed. Help is being provided through the use of technical assistance staff and consultant services, inservice training opportunities, financial incentives from discretionary funds, facilitating the improvement and restructuring efforts in other state agencies and waivers to statutes and regulations.

Reform issues

- Accountability
- Performance-based initiative
- Governance

Ohio Ohio's Omnibus Education Reform Act of 1989, Senate Bill #140, required the state board of education to set education performance indicators, measure the performance of school districts and buildings against these indicators and develop corrective action plans for districts and buildings deemed educationally deficient. It also mandated assessment testing in grades 8 and 10 in addition to grades 4 and 6. School districts must report results on a per school-building basis. The act codified competency-based education standards that later went into effect in 1991.

Senate Bill 140 also started the state on work creating a new education information management system designed to link school, district and state-level information and help people analyze and understand educational progress and funding.

The same bill directed districts to develop plans for interdistrict and intradistrict choice by the 1993-94 school year. Most districts developed plans for choice within districts, but declined to become involved in interdistrict choice activities.

In 1993, House Bill #152 established the Ohio Family First and Children's Cabinet Council, which in conjunction with the Governor's Education Management (GEM) Council, directs interagency collaboration efforts within the state. The children's cabinet brings together cabinet-level heads of state agencies, while the GEM council brings together leaders from the Ohio business community.

The state board of education developed a list of outcomes for 9-12th grades in reading, writing, mathematics and citizenship. The learning outcomes for each grade and subject are written at a level of specificity that is illustrated by the following 9th-grade writing outcome:

The student will produce a piece of writing that:

- Conveys a message related to the prompt (topic or description of a situation).
- Includes supporting ideas or examples
- Follows a logical order
- Conveys a sense of completeness
- Exhibits word choice appropriate to the audience, the purpose and the subject
- Includes clear language
- Contains complete sentences and may contain purposeful fragments
- Exhibits subject verb agreement
- Contains standard forms of verbs and nouns
- Exhibits appropriate punctuation
- Exhibits appropriate capitalization
- Contains correct spelling
- Is legible

There also is a curriculum framework that features performance objects in grades K-12. In addition, the state has a mandated 9th-grade test and a 12th-grade proficiency test. Passing the latter test is necessary for graduation.

In 1993, the legislature prohibited the state board of education from adopting any amendments to the minimum standards prior to September 1, 1995. After that day, no changes can be made unless they are approved through a concurrent resolution by majority of house and senate. In addition, any standards that have outcomes or learner standards for curriculum or assessments will be limited to issues directly related to student academic performance. Schools may receive state funding, called venture capital, to help them restructure.

In 1991, Ohio received a $9.9 million, National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. Under "Project Discovery," Ohio seeks to "improve educational outcomes in mathematics and science by building consensus for educational goals, improving education and creating professional development opportunities reaching mathematics and science teachers at levels K-16," according to NSF state profiles. Activities include: professional development, regionalization of services, networks, use of technology, new approaches to evaluation and assessment and public awareness activities. Under the proposal, Ohio also will create a framework and process for preservice education and sustained professional development of math and science teachers; establish eight regional centers to be staffed by teams of mathematician-scientist/educators and teacher-leaders; and focus on content areas and inquiry-based instruction.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Choice
- Interagency collaboration
- Professional development
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant

Oklahoma

Oklahoma's Education Reform and Funding Act of 1989 provided for a statewide curriculum focused on competencies, not courses, and an accompanying assessment program. The package also was designed to increase funding and reduce class size.

As part of those reforms, the state education board in 1991 approved learner outcomes for all grade levels. These outcomes took effect in the 1993-94 school year covering the following topics:

- Language arts
- Information skills
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Comprehensive health
- Computer
- Foreign language

- Fine arts
- Technology
- Business education

Students will be evaluated at several levels on the basis of learner outcomes. The outcomes themselves are grouped into grade-level specific outcomes so that schools have the flexibility to design and offer classes. School accreditation is to be based on student performance on the assessments and accompanying curriculum.

In 1992, the state board approved a set of rules and procedures for deregulation. Under the new procedures, school districts or individual school sites must submit deregulation plans for approval by a state department of education oversight group and the board itself. The local school board also must approve the plan.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance-based initiative
- Accountability

Oregon

The 1991 Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century, House Bill #3565, proposed an educational continuum from early childhood through the adult learning experience. The legislation directed the department of education to lead the efforts while working with other appropriate agencies, local school districts and citizens.

The act included upgraded Statewide Common Curriculum Goals and Essential Learning Skills adopted by the state board of education to achieve "the best educated citizenry in the nation" by the year 2000 and "the best in the world" by 2010. A public accountability system will be phased in, including on-site standardization visits, local school-district self-evaluation process, and a statewide information and assessment system to monitor school and school-district education outcomes. (The information and assessment system will provide a measure of student achievement in the knowledge and skill areas specified in the common curriculum goals.) The act also required an annual "report card" on the state of public schools and expanded early-childhood education opportunities in the state.

Additionally, the department of education was required to implement an assessment system for all students, a plan which is under development and being piloted at individual schools. That system will include performance-based assessment of the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve standards leading to a Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM).

Oregon is replacing its traditional high school diploma with two levels of certification. Students first will earn a CIM certifying their ability to meet the state determined criteria. Once the CIM is completed, students will select a subject focus and a program designed to prepare them for entry into the workforce or postsecondary education. Centering their work on the option they prefer, students will work toward a Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM).

Students who have received a CIM may attend any public education institution that provides a program leading to achievement of a CAM, a college preparatory or academic professional technical endorsement or both, and which meets state board of education requirements.

Beginning in 1997, each school district will be required to institute programs that allow students to qualify for a CAM with college preparatory and academic professional technical endorsements.

The CIM outcomes are grouped under core applications for living and foundation skills. The 11 outcomes are:

A. Core applications for living

1. Deliberate on public issues which arise in our representative democracy and in the world by applying perspectives from the social sciences.
2. Understand diversity and communicate in a second language, applying appropriate cultural norms.
3. Interpret human experience through literature and the fine and performing arts.
4. Apply science and math concepts and processes, showing an understanding of how they affect the world.
5. Understand positive health habits and behaviors that establish and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships.

B. Foundation skills

6. Think critically, creatively and reflectively in making decisions and solving problems.
7. Direct his or her own learning, including planning and carrying out complex projects.
8. Communicate through reading, writing, speaking and listening and through an integrated use of visual forms such as symbols and graphic images.
9. Use current technology, including computers, to process information and produce high-quality products.
10. Recognize, process and communicate quantitative relationships.
11. Participate as a member of a team, including providing leadership for achieving goals and working well with others form diverse backgrounds.

Progress toward the CAM is to be pursued via six different strands or individual majors selected by students after they have earned the CIM. Within each strand there are to be opportunities for working toward either a school to school or a school to work transition. The six strands are:

1 Arts and Communication
2 Business and Management
3 Health Services
4 Human Resources
5 Industrial and Engineering Systems
6 Natural Resource Systems

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance-based initiative
- Workforce skills
- Accountability
- Governance

- New Standards Project

Pennsylvania Education reform regulations for the Pennsylvania Department of Education were revised in 1993 to require clearly stated student learning outcomes and an authentic, varied system of assessment of those outcomes. The assessment system will provide parents and the community a measure by which schools and school districts may be held accountable for their students' achievement, not only of the outcomes, but also of the highest possible performance standards.

The regulations define six "common core goals" (which will not be used for student evaluation, but which will be used to inform curriculum and instruction) and nine "academic goals." The nine academic goals are accompanied by 53 student learning outcomes required for high school graduation.

The non-evaluated common core goals are:

1. Self-worth
2. Information and thinking skills
3. Learning independently and collaboratively
4. Adaptability to change
5. Ethical judgment
6. Honesty, responsibility and tolerance

The 53 learning outcomes are grouped in the following academic areas:

1. Communications
2. Mathematics
3. Science and technology
4. Environment and ecology
5. Citizenship
6. Arts and humanities
7. Career education and work
8. Wellness and fitness
9. Home economics

The reforms will establish clear expectations for students, teachers and schools, and a new testing program will evaluate student progress on academic subjects. The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment will provide parents and the community with information on how well the schools' programs are helping students achieve. In addition, Pennsylvania will measure its success nationally by participating in a multi-state assessment system.

State-level reform currently is focused on matching the teacher certification requirement (Chapter 49) to the new learner outcomes.

The Re:Learning effort in Pennsylvania has focused on policy around graduation requirements, assessment practices, site-based management and development of a new mission, the latter by helping the state department of education unify across bureaus.

Reform issues

- Performance-based initiative
- Re:Learning state
- Accountability
- New Standards Project

Puerto Rico

In September 1993, Puerto Rico passed a voucher bill, granting a $1,500 voucher to qualified families with students in grades 2-12. Families must have an income of less than $18,000 per year to be eligible for the grants which can be used at any public or private school. Students cannot claim a voucher to transfer from one private school to another, and private schools may not have more than 50% of their students using vouchers. The state set aside $10 million for the vouchers in 1993-94 and plans to increase that incremental to $30 million by 1997. The plan is being challenged in the courts.

In June 1992, the legislature approved site-based management in some schools. Implementation is to take five years, with 90 of the island's 1,650 public schools involved by January 1994.

Also in 1992, Puerto Rico received a five-year, $10 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. This grant, according to NSF's state profiles, focuses on: (1) improved teaching of science and mathematics to build the scientific literacy of all students, (2) curriculum aimed at developing depth of understanding and integration of knowledge by building students' higher-order thinking skills and motivation, (3) empowered teachers, (4) authentic assessment of teaching and learning based on performance and outcomes, (5) systemic assessment and accountability and (6) greater autonomy at the local level. Activities include: K-12 curriculum development, teacher empowerment and preservice training reform, technology-based communication, special awards, school empowerment, authentic assessment and systemic assessment and accountability.

Reform issues

- Voucher
- Governance
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant

Rhode Island

In 1992, Rhode Island's 21st Century Education Commission released *Educating All Our Children*, describing the state's education system and making 20 recommendations under six strategies. The broad strategies for creating and maintaining an excellent and equitable education system included:

1. Achieving excellence for all Rhode Island's students, through a department-created framework reflecting 21st-century outcomes; department of education reform to reduce unnecessary regulation and provide waivers; and development of new accountability structures, including statewide standards and benchmarks for student outcomes, performance-based and portfolio assessments supporting those outcomes, and sanctions and incentives for varying levels of performance
2. Organizing and governing Rhode Island schools for improved teaching and learning, through shared decisionmaking, ongoing improvement processes, redesigning the role of school governance committees, reorganizing the state department of education, and improving the way in which the state legislature addresses education issues.

3. Strengthening a system of professional development.
4. Linking education and social services for children and families through better use of the Children's Cabinet; establishment of Child Opportunity Zones, which would designate schools as special zones and enable them to provide more social services; encouragement for existing organizations and governmental bodies at different levels to work together and coordinate the delivery of services; and increased funding for preschool experiences for all at-risk students and their parents.
5. Financing the education system by increasing the state contribution to at least 60% of the cost, developing a guaranteed student entitlement program, increasing equity in state aid for public schools, and reviewing and restructuring special education funding.
6. Enhancing collaboration through the release of data on "least-cost options plans."

Governor Bruce Sundlun responded to the recommendations with a series of executive orders addressing public school finance, reorganization of the state department of education, development of state education standards and accountability mechanisms, and coordination of education and social services provision.

The state also has a "College Readiness Program," whereby everyone in the state with a high school diploma, or a GED, is given access to courses, tutoring and other related services to help them prepare for entrance to the University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College or the Community College of Rhode Island.

In 1991, Rhode Island received a five-year, $9.3 million, National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative (SSI) grant. NSF's state profiles noted, "the Rhode Island SSI will increase the effectiveness of K-8 mathematics and science education through a statewide initiative to build the capacity for change in institutionalization at all levels of the education system. Change will be initiated through collaborative efforts involving schools, higher education, business and industry, and parents." Activities included a statewide plan, school improvement teams, professional development, community awareness, school access to resources, equity and assessment. In 1994, NSF withdrew support for this grant.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Performance-based initiative
- Re:Learning state
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant (support withdrawn in 1994)

South Carolina

Curriculum frameworks have been developed as one of South Carolina's major reforms. Discipline-based frameworks have been completed for mathematics, foreign language and fine arts and released with a large public education campaign. State testing efforts are being scaled back from previous basic-skills testing and steered toward assessments better tied to the new curriculum frameworks. The state department of education also has done extensive work on understanding the changes necessary to match other components of the education system to the frameworks.

Previously, "Target 2000," passed in 1989, expanded early childhood development programs, including support for parents; expanded basic skills improvements in reading, writing, math and science; initiated

major dropout prevention programs; emphasized greater student understanding of higher-order thinking skills and creativity; provided incentives for innovation and high-performance schools; increased commitment for a high-quality teacher workforce; strengthened accountability; and developed programs to increase business and parent involvement in the schools.

Act 135, passed in 1993, focused on early-childhood education. The act required local areas to write and deliver five-year plans on how they planned to expand early-childhood education in their area. Districts are prohibited from only using "pull-out" programs and must include staff development programs in their plans. The act also included an innovative programs section and assistance for professional development. School-improvement plans are to be written by councils consisting of people representing the different groups interested and involved in the school.

Also in 1993, South Carolina received a five-year, $9.6 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. Under the grant, "South Carolina will provide quality and effective learning experiences in science and mathematics to guarantee science and mathematics literacy for all people of South Carolina," according to NSF state profiles. Activities include strengthening collaboration and communication and facilitating change.

Additionally, the state department of education is undergoing restructuring, and the Higher Education Commission has been meeting with K-12 education officials to improve the state's policy formulation processes.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Curriculum frameworks
- Accountability
- Workforce skills
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- National Education Goals
- Re:Learning state
- Site-based management
- New Standards Project

South Dakota

In 1991, South Dakota received a five-year, $7.5 million National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant to address systemic reform that would encourage improvement in science, mathematics, engineering and technology education through comprehensive reforms in the education systems of the state — kindergarten through university. The state's goals for systemic change address:

1. Integrating mathematics and science
2. Integrating mathematics and science with written and oral communication skills, arts education, social studies education and Native American culture
3. Teaching mathematics and science, kindergarten through university, in a hands-on, inquiry-based, cooperative learning environment
4. Using technology teaching effectively and appropriately
5. Addressing mathematical and scientific needs of the underserved

6. Implementing student assessment strategies that include performance-based assessment, authentic tasks and alternative assessments, such as portfolios and journals.

These changes are being pursued via a competitive grants program, curricular change models, postsecondary partnerships, increased communication among people involved, alternative forms of assessment and public relations work.

The state also is expanding an existing postsecondary dual-credit policy, in which students can earn both high school and college credit for coursework at postsecondary institutions. Use of the Rural Development Telecommunications network is allowing more high school students to take advantage of college-level courses not offered in or near their high schools. The two-way video and two-way audio system is expected to serve over 50 high schools by fall 1994.

The state also operates a Teacher Educator/Teacher Mentor program, which served nearly 185 participants in the 1993-94 school year. The program provides stipends for people supervising student teachers, as well as for individuals mentoring first-year teachers.

The state also is exploring ways to combine economic development opportunities with innovative high schools in small rural communities. "Education Counts" is one initiative which fosters school/business partnerships. The state also has a technical preparation initiative involving 80 school systems.

Reform issues

- Accountability
- Economic development
- Postsecondary open enrollment
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant

Tennessee The Tennessee Better Schools Program includes provision of kindergarten for every eligible child in the state; "Basic Skills First" to help K-8th graders learn essential reading and math skills; "Computer Skills Next," a statewide computer literacy program that introduces a 30-lesson computer literacy course at the 7th and 8th grades, "More Math and Science," a requirement of additional math and science credit to earn a high school diploma; alternative schools; and career ladders for teachers.

The Tennessee Education Improvement Act of 1992 gave the commissioner of education authority to prescribe a management-information system for the state. The commissioner was to recommend to the state board of education rules relating to performance indicators and value-added testing. Performance goals are to be set for school systems based on performance indicators adopted by the board.

The act also required students, prior to graduation, to pass the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program at a specified level and complete an exit exam which measures student readiness for college or the workplace. The act mandated a redesign of the high school curriculum to eliminate the general education track and replace it with a stronger vocational and academic curriculum.

Teacher assessment is to be "outcome-based," involving the use of a "value-added" assessment. Under this system, teachers will be assessed on the basis of how much learning they have added to their students in the course of the year they spend with them. Progress by students, from one year to the next, will be the measure of effective teaching. Progress by students in each class will be used to

evaluate teachers, as well as school progress toward established performance standards. Schools and teachers that fail to make measurable progress on the assessment can be placed on probation.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Choice

Texas The Texas Education Improvement Act of 1991 attempted to provide an equalized funding formula, incentive funding for high performance schools, performance goals for school districts, value-added assessments, ungraded K-3, waiver of state rules to allow site-based decisionmaking in up to eight districts and school choice. However, the court found the equalization of school funding aspects of this plan unacceptable.

The state currently is attempting to settle a school finance lawsuit through a new model. Previous solutions to the state's school finance problems have not been acceptable to the courts. The most recent solution involves having districts with higher spending share their resources with districts with fewer resources or amend their districts to include new areas.

Outside of school finance, the state passed accountability legislation in 1993. The new system includes: development of an annual performance-based assessment, exit-level exams for high school students, school report cards, and rewards and sanctions related to accreditation for high- and low-performing schools. The legislation will sunset the existing education code in fall 1995, at which point the commissioner of education is required to submit a new code.

The state also is changing the state department so that it can provide more technical assistance. Assistance capacity in the state department is being shifted to regional service centers, and the focus of department activities will be, not on program areas but on geographic areas. Consequently, state department staff must become generalists, not specialists.

The state also has allowed waivers for school improvement, with 727 issued for staff development in 1992-93. Schools can reduce student contact days and conduct professional development training instead. While waivers are available for up to 15 fewer days, most schools do not ask for more than they had before recent reductions. Previously, five professional development days were funded.

In 1992, Texas received a five-year, $10 million National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. The original program is undergoing redesign, and a revised profile will be available in 1994.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Accountability
- Workforce skills
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- New Standards Project

Utah In 1992, the legislature enacted House Bill 162, which encouraged local school districts to conduct strategic planning for the long term improvement of education. The legislation stated that it was the state's policy to "expect that parents shall provide a home environment that values education and send their children to school prepared to learn." The legislation:

1. Encouraged employers to support parental involvement in schools
2. Required school districts to develop plans to implement a comprehensive system of accountability based on students' demonstrating competency in required skills and mastery of required knowledge; develop technology plans, implement public-school choice programs; establish strategic planning at district and school levels, as well as site-based decision-making; and involve business and industry through partnerships.
3. Encouraged schools or districts to submit proposals for waivers to rules or policies
4. Required each district and school to report to its patrons, with reporting involving teachers, parents and the community at large

To support these activities, the legislature directed the state education department to develop and disseminate model curriculum, conduct a public-awareness program on competency based education, report on statewide progress, disseminate successful site based decisionmaking models to other districts and schools, and revise teacher certification requirements. Each school was encouraged to establish a school community council, including teachers, classified employees, the principal or principal's designee, parents of students, members of the community at large and, where appropriate, students.

In 1993, through House Bill 100, the state set up the Centennial Schools Program, through which a district could delegate to an individual school the authority to make decisions regarding teacher career ladders, technology in the classroom, class size and any other area designated in the school board's agreement. Selected schools receive $5,000, plus $20 per student, based on the school's average 1992-93 daily membership.

The state also is involved in early graduation incentives. Students who graduate before the end of 12th grade are eligible for financial assistance in a Utah public college, university, community college, area vocational center or any other public institution in the state. The school that graduates the student receives a percentage of the state money it would have received had the student remained in school after completing all the necessary coursework.

The state government also has set aside funds for gang prevention and intervention programs in the schools and efforts to plan technology development at the school and district levels.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Choice
- Governance
- Accountability

Vermont Vermont has led the drive to implement portfolio assessment, a factor that has garnered much media attention. However, the state's reform effort started with the Vermont Common Core, created in 1989 and revised several times since then, incorporating feedback from over 4,000 people, with public and teacher involvement. It was adopted by the State Board of Education in 1993.

The Common Core includes four "Vital Results," detailing what is expected of students in communication, reasoning and problem solving, personal development and social responsibility. In addition, "Fields of Knowledge" outlines expectations in science, mathematics and technology, arts and humanities, social sciences and emerging fields of knowledge. The Common Core goes on to list Vermont's "Core Principles of Learning" – learning will be balanced, learning opportunities will be equitable, learning will be active, learning will connect disciplines, and learning will happen in a variety of ways.

Vermont also is creating curriculum frameworks based on the Common Core. These frameworks will "guide" local curriculum development. Vermont is committed to integrating traditional disciplines within the new curriculum. Three academic commissions consisting of people from outside the state education department are working on curriculum frameworks in science, math and technology; arts and humanities; and social sciences.

The Common Core also lists "Core Principles of Assessment" which are going to be used to help improve the portfolio assessment in the state. The Core Principles are "assessment is a key part of education, assessment will be as authentic as possible, assessment will be fair, assessment will be designed to give valuable results, assessment results will be used responsibly, and assessment will be monitored."

To help implement the portfolio assessment, teacher networks were established in eight regions to train teachers on how to use portfolios, provide support and convene scorers. The portfolio assessment has been described as a "teacher-run system," meaning that teachers do most of the work designing, scoring and developing the new assessment system.

Vermont is actively reforming the education system on several other issues as well. The state is moving toward a statewide teacher collective bargaining unit, has begun extensive work on collaboration between the education and health and human service agencies in the state, is working hard on full inclusion of special-education students and has worked to reorganize the state department of education. In addition, Vermont is designing a deregulation system that would provide "blanket" waivers for schools contracting to achieve performance goals.

In 1992, Vermont received a five-year, $9.6 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative (SSI) grant. "The goal of the Vermont SSI is to reform the educational system, including curriculum, teacher preparation and training, assessment, school structures and instruction, and materials, so that all students gain increased science, mathematics and technology skills," according to NSF state profiles. Activities include the state board and Agency for Development and Community Affairs establishing an Institute for Mathematics, Science and Technology, statewide curriculum intensive professional development, redesigning college science, math and technology courses, performance assessments, and statewide telecomputing network linking schools, business and higher education.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance-based initiative
- Workforce skills
- Choice (limited)
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- New Standards Project

Virginia

Virginia's Common Core of Learning was passed by the state board in May 1993, and the state is planning to create a new assessment to match it. Recently, opposition to issues of values and self-esteem being involved in the performance-based system led former Governor L. Douglas Wilder to withdraw support for the initiative. The current status of related reform initiatives in Virginia is unclear.

Prior to the governor's action to rescind the Common Core, Virginia's Common Core of Learning described "the core of essential skills, knowledge and attitudes that students must acquire and practice in order to succeed in school and in life." It detailed fundamental skills in thinking, problem solving, communicating, quantifying and collaborating, essential knowledge of citizenship, the natural world, and cultural and creative endeavors, and critical attitudes toward responsibility, learning and work.

In 1991, the Virginia Board of Education also passed the "World Class Education Initiative." The initiative's goal is to provide all children in the state with quality education by the year 2000. The initiative has four components:

1. Ensuring all students will be prepared to enter and continue in the skilled workforce or to enter and complete further academic and technical education.
2. Defining, using the Common Core of Learning as a centerpiece, what all students should know and be able to do when they graduate, with an emphasis on application of knowledge in the real world. Implementation includes staff development, shared decisionmaking, recognition and rewards for schools demonstrating success, assistance for schools in trouble, high expectations, partnerships with businesses, parental involvement, collaboration among governmental agencies and child advocates.
3. Assessing student outcomes and holding schools accountable for results.
4. Ensuring that all students have an opportunity to master the Common Core of Learning.

The state board also passed a vision statement which held the following concepts as essential: the Common Core of Learning, focus on outcomes, high expectations and high stakes, parental and student responsibility, and focus on the individual child.

In 1992, Virginia received a five-year, $9.6 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Statewide Systemic Initiative grant. Under the grant, the commonwealth's education system is changing to enable all children to meet the difficult demands of living and working effectively in today's scientific and technological society, according to NSF state profiles. Activities include lead teachers, new pre- and inservice training models, instructional materials, local educational leadership/administrative support, community action, communications technology and assessment.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance based initiative (status unclear)
- Workforce skills
- National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative grant
- New Standards Project

Washington Washington's Education Reform legislation of 1993 Engrossed Substitute House Bill (SHB) 1209, raises standards for learning and holds schools accountable to help students achieve the new standards. It promotes "community schools" and supports new programs for workforce preparation.

The bill also established five student learning goals for the state which are to guide the work of the Commission on Student Learning. That commission is to develop "Essential Academic Learning Requirements and Assessments" and dictate requirements for a Certificate of Mastery. The five goals are:

1. Read with comprehension, write with skill and communicate effectively and responsibly in a variety of ways and settings.
2. Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics, social, physical and life sciences, history, geography, arts, and health and fitness.
3. Think analytically, logically and creatively, and integrate experience and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems.
4. Understand the importance of work and how performance and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities.
5. Function as responsible individuals and contributing members of families, work groups and communities.

The legislation requires development of new assessments that emphasize demonstration of what students know and are able to do. The assessments will emphasize practical application of skills and knowledge. Implementation will begin in the 1996-97 school year. A school accountability system will provide financial incentives and assistance to schools and will allow intervention in schools that persistently fail to improve student learning. The Certificate of Mastery, to be required for high school graduation, will serve as cumulative evidence to parents, employers and college officials that a student has demonstrated proficiency in essential skills and knowledge. The Commission on Student Learning will develop new academic standards and assessments and the accountability system. Statewide participation by all schools in the new assessment system will begin in the 2000-2001 school year.

A joint select legislative committee on education reform also will review all K-12 education laws and recommend repeal of those laws that inhibit student learning. It also will monitor progress of the Commission on Student Learning, the superintendent and the state board of education in achieving education reform.

Schools will provide parents with a school report card that demonstrates its progress toward improved learning for all students.

The Commission on Student Learning also is required to develop programs for school assistance and intervention programs and building based performance incentives.

ESHB 1209 also included $400,000 for a Center for the Improvement of Student Learning, established within the superintendent of public instruction's office to serve as a clearinghouse of information on successful restructuring and parental involvement activities, provide research on best practices, develop and distribute materials, and provide training and consultation services.

In 1990, the legislature adopted interdistrict "choice" and postsecondary enrollment-options programs. All school districts are required to participate in interdistrict choice, but are allowed to restrict the number of non-resident students they accept. The postsecondary options program includes all public community and technical colleges and pays the tuition at secondary institutions for students who have not yet graduated from high school.

Two major actions related to governance are under way. First, as a condition for receiving staff development funding, school district boards of directors are required to develop a policy to share instructional decisionmaking with school building personnel. Also, decisions regarding $23 million of staff development funding are to be made by building personnel, not school district central offices.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance based initiative
- Accountability
- Choice
- Governance
- New Standards Project

West Virginia

The West Virginia State Board of Education has approved participation of four high schools in a school to work transition project, entitled "West Virginia PLUS." The program has high school students conduct their own research on the skills today's employers require. They then teach their findings to middle school students.

The state also is exploring ways to improve the technology available in schools and has focused resources on increasing teacher salaries. Assessments will be developed around learning outcome statements to be drafted by the state board.

Reform issues

- Performance assessment
- Performance based initiatives
- Accountability

Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Testing Program is being developed in three phases. Phase I includes standardized achievement tests to assess students' knowledge and skills in four academic areas. These tests were required for all 8th and 10th graders beginning in the 1993-94 school year. Phase II will focus on development of performance based measures, and Phase III will include a portfolio review process. Phases II and III should be ready for implementation in the 1996-97 school year.

The state's 1991-93 budget contained funding and a position to develop a 10th-grade "gateway" assessment, which is to be based on agreed-upon learner outcomes and will require students to demonstrate mastery of essential skills. This component also should be phased in by 1996.

The state has charter schools, and Milwaukee has a unique parental-choice program. In 1993, the budget increased funding to allow an additional 1,000 to 1,500 students to participate in the choice program.

Reform issues

- Performance-based initiative
- Accountability
- Workforce skills
- Charter schools
- Choice

Wyoming Performance-based accreditation standards were established in 1990 for elementary and secondary programs. The same legislation calls for creation of a Common Core of Skills and Knowledge. The state also is establishing university-school partnerships to improve teacher training.

In addition, the state department of education is undergoing reorganization.

Index

Accountability:

Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin

Charter Schools:

California, Colorado, Georgia, Massachusetts, Missouri, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, Wisconsin

Choice:

Arkansas, Arizona (limited), Colorado, Idaho, Illinois (piloting), Iowa, Kentucky (schools in crisis), Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin

Curriculum Frameworks (central to reform):

California, South Carolina, Maine

Economic Development:

South Dakota

Governance:

Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Utah, Washington

K-3 Class size reduction:

Nevada

Performance Assessment:

Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia

Performance-based Initiatives:

Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin

Postsecondary (open enrollment and student aid):

Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, South Dakota

Professional Development (central to reform):

Indiana, Missouri, Ohio

National Education Goals:

Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, South Carolina

New Standards Project:

Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington

National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative:

Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island (until 1994), South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, Virginia

Re:Learning:

Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Missouri, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina

Site-Based Management:

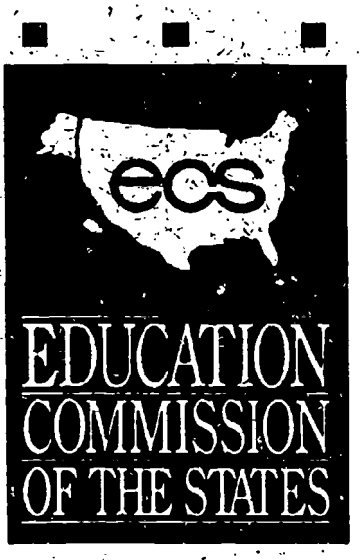
Florida, Colorado (Denver), Illinois (Chicago), California (Los Angeles), South Carolina

Vouchers:

Puerto Rico, Wisconsin (Milwaukee)

Workforce Skills:

Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin



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